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TWO TREATISES,

VIZ.

THE CHRISTIAN *FREEDOME,*

AND

THE DEFORMED FORME OF A FORMALL PROFESSION.

By that late faithfull and worthy Minister of Iesus Christ, JOHN PRESTON, Doctor in Divinity, Chaplaine in Ordinary to his Majestie, Master of Emanuell Colledge in *Cambridge*, and sometimes Preacher of Lincolnes Inne.

LONDON,
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THE CHRISTIAN FREEDOME:

OR,

The Charter of the Gospel, shewing the priviledge and prerogative of the Saints by vertue of the Covenant.

Wherein these foure points of Doctrine are properly observed; plainely proved both by Scripture, and reason, and pithily applied, *Viz.*

1. That he that is in the state of grace lyeth in no knowne sinne, no sinne hath dominion over him.
2. That sinne though it doth not raigne in the Saints, yet it doth remaine and dwell in them.
3. That the way to overcome sinne, is to get assurance of the Love, and grace, and favour of God, whereby it is forgiven them.
4. That whosoever is under the Law, sinne hath dominion over him.

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ROM. 6. 12.

Let not sinne therefore raigne in your mortall bodies, that you should obey it in the lusts thereof.

Printed 1641.

The Names of Doctor IOHN PRESTON his ſeverall Treatiſes.

1. A Treatiſe of the Attributes of God containing } 17 Sermons upon divers Texts.

2. Foure Treatiſes viz.
   1. A remedy againſt Covetouſnes, upon *Coloſſ.*3.5.
   2. An Elegant and lively deſcription of ſpiritual life & death upon *Iohn* 5.25.
   3. The Doctrine of ſelfe deniall, upon *Luke* 9.23.
   4. A Treatiſe of the Sacrament, upon 1 *Iohn.*5.14.

3. The Saints daily Exerciſe, or a Treatiſe of Prayer } upon 1 *Theſſ.*5.17.

4. The New Covenant in 14 Sermons, upon *Gen.*17.1.2. Vnto which is added 4 Sermons upon *Eccleſ.*9.1.2.11.12.

5. The Saints Qualification, containing, *viz.*
   1. A Treatiſe of Humiliation in 10 Sermons, the firſt 9 upon *Rom.*1.18. The tenth Preached before the common houſe of Parliament, upon *Numb.*25.10.11.
   2. Of Sanctification or the New Creature in 9 Sermons upon 1 *Cor.*5.17.
   3. Of Communion with Chriſt in the Sacrament in 3 Sermons upon 1 *Corinth.*10.16.

6. The Doctrine of the Saints Infirmities upon 2 *Chron.*30.18.19,20.

7. The Breſtplate of Faith and Love, containing 18 Sermons upon three ſeverall Texts, *viz. Revel.*1.17. 1 *Theſ.*1.3. *Gal.*5.6.

8. Five

8. Five Sermons Preached before his Majestie, *viz.*
   1. The New Life, upon 1 *Joh.* 5. 15.
   2. A sensible demonstration of the Diety, upon *Esay* 64. 4.
   3. Of exact walking upō *Eph.* 5. 15.
   4. The Pillar and ground of Truth, upon 1 *Tim.* 3. 15.
   5. Sam. Support of sorrowfull sinners upon 1 *Sam.* 12. 20. 21. 22.
9. Two Treatises of Mortification, and Humiliation, upon *Col.* 3. 5. *Ephes.* 2. 1, 2, 3. Together with the liveleſſe life, A Treatiſe of Vivification.
10. His Remaines, containing 3. excellent Treatiſes, *viz.*
    1. *Judas's* Repentance.
    2. The Saints Spirituall ſtrength.
    3. *Pauls* Converſion.
11. The Golden Scepter, with the Churches Mariage, being three Treatiſes in one volume.
12. The Fulneſſe of Chriſt, upon *John* 1. 16.
13. A Heavenly Treatiſe of the Divine Love of Chriſt, in Five Sermons, upon 1 *Cor.* 16. 22.

THE CHRISTIAN FREEDOME, OR THE CHARTER OF THE GOSPEL, SHEWING THE PRIVILEDGE AND Prræogative of the Saints, by vertue of the Covenant.

Rom. 6. 14.

For ſinne ſhall not have dominion over you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

THeſe words are brought in thus; the Apoſtle exhorts them not to ſinne, but to give their members as inſtruments unto righteouſneſſe: and to move them to this, hee tells them that ſinne was not their Lord now as it was heretofore, and that it ſhall have no more dominion over them, and therefore he bids them ſtrive againſt it:

and then he adds a reason of this, because *they were not under the law, but under grace*, now Christ hath changed their hearts: for while a man is under the Law, sinne hath dominion over him; it tells him what to doe, but gives him no power to doe it: but you have the grace of sanctification to change your hearts, and enable you to every good word and work, so that *you delight in the Law after the inner man*, albeit *you see another law in your members warring against the Law of your minde, and bringing you into captivity to the law of sinne which is in your members*, as it is said, *Chap.7.ver.23.*

Doct. 1. Whence wee may learne, That *hee that is in the state of grace, lyeth in no knowne sinne; no sinne hath dominion over him.*

Now, sinne is said to have no Dominion over a man, three manner of wayes, *viz.* in regard

1. It hath no right to rule over him; it is no more our Lord, but is as a servant that hath no dominion, but is said to offer violence to us: as if the King of *Spaine* should rule over us, hee hath no dominion over us.

2. In regard it is not obeyed, for there it hath dominion: as a Prince may have right to a Kingdome, yet if hee be not obeyed, hee hath no dominion.

3. In regard though it strive against us, yet it never gets the victory: for though it assault us, yet if it get not the victory, it hath no dominion over us: this is proved by three Similitudes which must be explaned, *viz.*

First, it was our Master, and we its servants; but now

now wee have changed our Master, and *are become the servants of righteousnesse*, ver. 18.

Secondly, it is said that we were married to sin, and it had dominion and command over us, as the husband over the wife; but now it is dead, and there is a divorce betweene us, and now wee are married to Christ, and hee commands us, and wee obey.

Thirdly, it is said we are *dead to sinne, and alive to God*, ver. 11. and therefore we cannot live in sinne: for, command a dead body to goe about a businesse, and he cannot, because he is dead.

Now the reasons of the point be these. The first is taken from Christ; wee are *ingrafted into Christ, and into his death, and into the similitude of his resurrection, verse 5*. *Reas. 1.*

We are grafted as a graft into Christ, and all the old sap is taken away, and wee have new sap, and bring forth new fruit, and have no other, because we grow in another tree, and we live to God: yet we may commit sinne, though wee allow not our selves in it; for *they that are Christs, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts thereof*: if therefore there be any lust reigning in us, we are not in Christ. Againe, *if any man be in Christ, hee is a new creature*, and therfore he doth not wallow in his old sins: so saith God, *I will give you a new heart*; and, *all things are become new*; and, *old things are done away*: therefore wee cannot lye in any knowne sinne. Againe, whosoever is in Christ, *hath received of his fulnesse, and grace for grace*; *in him we are able to doe all things*: and therefore if we cannot strive against old sinnes,

wee are not in Christ.

Secondly, becauſe wee have the Spirit of God ruling in us, and therefore we walk after the Spirit, and not after the fleſh: now if we lye in any known ſinne, we have not the Spirit, and therefore are not in the ſtate of grace: if any man have not the Spirit of grace, he is not the Sonne of God: now if he walk after the fleſh, hee hath not the Spirit, for the Spirit gives him ability to ſtrive againſt all ſinnes.

Thirdly, he is borne of God: now, *he that is born of God, ſinneth not*, that is, ſinne ruleth not over him: for a man is ſaid to ſinne that favours wickedneſſe, and ſetteth his heart to ſinne: hee ſinneth not, becauſe he is like God, as a ſonne is like his father; and therefore a wicked man is like the devill, becauſe he is his Father, and his wickedneſſe is in him, and therefore the devill is called the father of the wicked: and ſo every regenerate man hath all the righteouſneſſe of Chriſt, though not in the ſame degree; he hath perfect holineſſe *of parts*, though not *of degrees*: now then he hath no member of Satan in him, that is, no knowne ſinne which hee loveth.

Fourthly, becauſe hee hath the whole law written in his heart, and his heart is ſet to obey the whole law, and therefore hee cannot lye in any knowne ſinne.

Fifthly, becauſe he is wholly changed and tranſlated to another man: which is expreſt two wayes. 1. The whole drift of his minde is changed. As ſuppoſe the earth were made free, the whole bent of it were to goe upward; ſo a man is wholly bent towards

towards heaven, or else his heart is not changed: and if so, he can lye in no knowne sinne. 2. He is changed in his taste. S. *Paul* saith, *They that are in Christ, savour not the things of the flesh, but of the spirit*: every sinne is bitter to the regenerate man; if it be not, then he savoureth the things of the flesh. To this is that agreeable, *Keepe this feast with unleavened bread, and not with old leaven of maliciousnesse*: we must be unleavened bread to Christ, we must give no allowance to sinne.

Sixthly, because they know God. The Lord saith by his Prophet, *I will write my law in their hearts, and they shall know me*: so that with this writing the law in their hearts, they cannot but know sinne; for they are changed in their mindes before they can know God: hence I inferre that he that knowes God, will not change from the immutable God to the mutable creature; and they that doe it, doe it because they know not God.

Seventhly, because hee hath faith, which will make him not lie in any knowne sinne: for all sins are either of the temptation of the devill, the flesh, or the world: now, faith overcomes all these.

1. It overcommeth the world; *This is the victory that overcommeth the world, even your faith*: but if the world could overcome the regenerate in any temptation, then this were not true that *faith overcommeth the world*; but he shall not be overcome by the glory and riches of the world.

Secondly the flesh; *The just walketh in his integrity.* To this may be added, that blessings are everywhere annexed to the keeping of the commande-

ments; *Blessed are they that have respect unto thy commandements: If you leane to the right hand, or to the left, &c,* Againe, *If you keepe the whole law, and offend in any one, you are guilty of the whole law.* But, besides these Scriptures, there be other reasons to prove that the regenerate man cannot lye in any knowne sinne.

First, because hee that lyes in any knowne sinne, hath another for his Lord and God, and so is an Idolater, and so cannot be regenerate, for hee yeeldeth to the same still; if it commands, hee obeyeth; God commanding him, hee neglecteth it, and therefore maketh it his God.

Secondly, because he that lyeth in any knowne sinne, will be unconstant in the serving of God: now God rejecteth such an one; for though the temptation to that sinne being removed, hee serve God; yet that sinne setting upon him, hee forsakes Gods service, and obeyeth it, and when soever occasion is offered, hee turneth to obey it: now such unconstancie God hateth. As among men a flower though it be more beautifull than a pearle, yet it is not regarded so much, because it is fading; and a ship may saile safe a great while, but yet falling upon a rock maketh shipwrack: so a man may *make shipwrack of faith and a good conscience*; and such a one cannot be in the state of grace.

Thirdly, because hee that lyeth in any knowne sinne, will, if he had like strong temptations, commit all the sinnes in the world; as be a man enclined to covetousnesse or uncleannesse, hee would commit any other if hee were as much enclined to any

any other: now, ſuch an one cannot be in the ſtate of grace.

Fourthly, becauſe if a man have a good heart, no ſinne can grow there, becauſe it is out of its proper place, and therefore cannot proſper: as plants that grow in *India*, if they be ſet here, wither; ſo every ſinne in a good heart is out of its proper place, and wil not grow, but wither every day more & more: but he that findeth ſinne growing in his heart, his heart is not regenerate.

Fifthly, becauſe he muſt hate the word of God and godly men: for when a man is ready to commit ſinne, the word is at him to diſſwade him, godly men diſſwade him; and therefore now if he doe it, and they ſtill rebuke him, hee commeth to account the word a reproach, and he hates it and good men likewiſe. Thus *Herod* is *Johns* friend a great while, till he tels him of his beloued ſinne, and then off goes his head: ſo hee hates God, and wiſhes there were none, becauſe he reſolveth to ſinne, and God reproves him, and ſo hee cannot be in a good eſtate.

Sixthly and laſtly, becauſe all his actions will have an evill tincture from that his ſinne; it ſo ſwayeth all he doth, that nothing is currant in Gods ſight. As if a man were ſet to get honour, though he did not directly fall into that ſinne, yet hee ſquareth all his actions that way, hee affecteth ſuch perſons as may further that his intent, ſo that ſinne leaveneth every action of his; and whenſoever any act of religion oppoſeth him, he then forſaketh all: as if a man have a project to get a harveſt that

is

is not yet come, all that hee doth, is for that end, hee ploweth, ſoweth, and the like; ſo it is with a man that hath a ſinne, and reſolves to follow it, hee byaſſeth all his actions by that, therefore God abhorres him and all that he doth.

Vſe 1. Firſt, this is to try us: whereby every man may know whether he be in the ſtate of grace or no. If he lies in the leaſt knowne ſinne that is, hee is but counterfeit; if though he be admoniſhed, and told that God will not have him to doe ſuch a thing, yet he doth it, it is a ſigne he is not in a good eſtate: as if a man knew and were perſwaded he ought not to abound in idle ſpeeches, and yet will, it is a ſigne he is not in the ſtate of grace. So when he is commanded to pray, and yet doth it not, or doth it only for ſhew, it's a ſigne he is in a bad eſtate: or if hee knew it a ſinne to be idle, and is perſwaded of it, and yet will, it's a ſigne his eſtate is not good: ſo for immoderate gaming, if one be told hee ſhould not, yet will uſe it, certainly he is bad: ſo for the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, and the pride of life, when a man ſhall ſpend all his time, and finde all thoughts bent that way for any one of them, certaine it is his heart is not gracious; for then theſe thoughts would not abound in him, but thoughts of growing in grace; but if his morning thoughts be for ſatisfying of the fleſh and the luſts thereof, or his ſecret plots, he may juſtly feare it's a reigning ſinne: for when all his projects aud thoughts are upon one thing, as to be in fine apparell, it's certaine ſinne reigneth in him, and ſo he is in the ſtate of damnation; as a Scholer that wholly aymes at

vaine

vaine glory, and how to get honour and credit, that ſinne reigneth in him.

But there were many which ſeemed religious men, which had theſe infirmities in them in the Scriptures. *Object.*

True, and many therefore not truly regenerated, but ſeeming only ſo: now many make a faire ſhow under the meanes, when falling into temptations, they fall away: but if they be not commanded, or think not of it, great faults may ſtand with true grace; but if they be admoniſhed by their conſcience, or others, and told they muſt not doe it, then their eſtate is not good; for true grace cannot ſtand with theſe failings. *Anſw.*

Now, the ſignes whereby we may know, whether we live in knowne ſinnes or not, are theſe.

1. Living in a knowne ſinne is of two ſorts; 1. *Knowne*, when men *ſell themſelves to commit wickedneſſe before the Lord*, as *Ahab* did; when he powreth out himſelfe to vanity, as when a man ſhall give up himſelfe to drink or to company, or to commit any ſinne of uncleanneſſe, or giveth himſelfe to ſpend all of his time in recreations, this is evident to the world and to his owne conſcience. Againe, when he plainely forſaketh God and good courſes which he tooke before, as *Demas* did, this is plaine, he lyeth in a knowne ſinne. Secondly, the *ſecret* lying in ſinne, the ſignes whereof are theſe.

1. When a man committeth it ordinarily: this is that *Paul* ſaith, that the Saints fall upon occaſions: as if a man be ſailing into *France*, a tempeſt driveth him into *Spaine*; ſo the Saints face is towards

wards heaven, but a ſuddaine paſſion may drive them another way. To commit ſinne ordinarily, is to commit it when temptation aſſaileth, and occaſion is offered, and impediments removed, then hee commits the ſinne ordinarily; for if there were ſuch temptations alwayes, hee would commit the ſinne alwayes: as *Pharaoh* was good by fits, he was often reſtored, and deſired *Moſes* to pray for him; yet when temptation came, hee would not let the people goe, though before he had intended to do it. So *Saul*, when opportunity was offered, would have killed *David*, though he ſwore not to doe it; and ſo *Hazael*: this is committing of ſinnes ordinarily.

Secondly, When a man rejecteth admonitions, and the reprover. *A poore childe is better than a fooliſh* (that is a rich) *King that will no longer be admoniſhed*, for then his heart is evill: for if a man be willing to have his luſt mortified, hee is well pleaſed with him that brings him a knife to cut it off, becauſe he doth as he would have him to doe: but when men are purpoſed to lye in ſinne, they doe as a man doth with Phyſick that he loatheth, he hateth even the very pot it ſelfe wherein it was; ſo they hate them that admoniſh them, even as dogs: but if they can endure the company of good men, it is a ſigne their hearts are good.

Thirdly, Abſtinence from occaſions: for many ſay their infirmities make them runne into ſuch and ſuch ſinnes; but if they were minded to leave their ſinnes, they would leave their evill company and all occaſions. To this adde the uſe of the meanes: for hee that purpoſeth to forſake his ſinnes, will uſe the

the meanes: as if a man that is a drunkard, will keepe drunkards company, hee hath not purposed to forsake his sinnes, for then he would forsake and leave his evill company: but if hee use the meanes for mortifying the sinnes hee loveth, then it is a signe he is willing to leave sinne.

Now the meanes for mortifying sinfull lusts in us, are these.

First, to make a vow not to commit that sinne, nor touch the occasions; for then it is a signe our heart is sincere: this is a comfort to those that have made vowes; which should be more used, not to make perpetuall vowes, but for some short time.

Secondly, to fast and pray; for some lusts are not cast out but by these three.

Thirdly, to use godly mens company, for their practise and example helps them to forsake their sinnes, to fast and pray.

Another signe of not lying in any knowne sin, is whē a man prayes for admonitions, that God would stirre up some to admonish him, and can be content to search reasons out of the Scripture against it, and is glad when he heares it reproved in the publique ministery.

Fourthly, when we can be content to be deprived of many things which might further our lusts, and to loath what sweetnesse might encrease them; that is a sure signe that sinne rules not in us.

Fifthly, when a man confesseth his sinnes particularly, and plainely: for this is a signe hee would forsake them: this reason the Scripture doth show, because then the conscience maketh such a noyse

that he cannot denie it; for when a man is purposed to continue in sinne; hee will not confesse his sinnes, no not to God: it is said when they came to *John* Baptist, *They confessed their sinnes, Matth.3.6.* So *David* saith, *I said, I will confesse my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sinne. Psal.32.5.*

Sixthly, When he is easily convicted: but when men will not be convicted, but seeke out distinctions to maintaine their sinne, it is a signe it is prevalent in them. Againe, when they will not examine both sides, but runne to commit it, and stop their eares *like a deafe adder, which refuseth to heare the voyce of the Charmer, charme he never so wisely*, and will not heare the reasons against that sinne, least they should be restrained. Therefore the righteous are said to *ponder their wayes*, and *consider their paths*, and to *try everything*, and to *take that which is good.* Now, hee that will but heare reasons against the sinne he doth, he is none of these: but when he will not be convinced, which is the first work of the spirit, it is a signe he is under the dominion of sinne.

Seventhly, when a man abstaineth from sinne not onely out of a naturall conscience, but out of a spirituall; for a naturall conscience may deceive him: for there be three degrees of conscience: First, a prophane man hath some conscience; Secondly, a civill man hath more conscience; yet both naturall: Thirdly, a godly man hath most conscience.

Paul speaketh of the heathen, that they had a conscience that did *accuse and excuse them*: but when a man

a man doth not commit sinne, being enlightned by a spirituall conscience, which is when a man hath a love to the contrary grace, and is carried with a certaine desire to doe it (as men eat) though there were no reward, and hate the sinne, and will not commit it, this is a good signe that sinne hath not dominion over him: but a man may have a restraint from a naturall conscience, yet it may have dominion over him, because it is as a barking dogge, that keepes the theefe from robbing.

Eighthly, when a man 1. Doth not purpose to commit the sinne; 2. Hath reluctancie in the committing of it. 3. Grieveth afterwards, and riseth with a better resolution not to doe it. But if this proceed from a naturall conscience, it is nothing: but if it proceed from a spirituall conscience and hatred of sinne, this is a good signe.

Ninthly, when after striving we have the victory: for we shall have the victory if we strive aright. This takes away their excuse that say it's their infirmitie: but if they lye not in sinne, they will have the victory over it; else thou art not a King, for a King is victorious; yet a King may have rebels, yea, he may be wounded, yet hee keepes his power. So the Saints may have many infirmities, yea they may have sound falls, yet in the end they have the victory; *God shall tread Satan under their feet*: wherefore the Godly mans heart, though hee faileth sometimes, is like a troubled fountaine, which though it be muddie, yet because there is a spring of grace in his heart, it worketh it selfe pure againe, and works out all the mud. Therefore con-

tent not your selves with dislike of sinne, but leave not till you have got the victory.

Tenthly, Observe whether thou delightest in those that commit the same sinnes: if you doe, you lye in sinne, whatsoever you pretend. *They doe not onely those things, but have pleasure in those that doe them. Rom. 1. ult.* This is a signe of a desperate heart. For a man may be drawne to sinne by passion, yet his heart may be upright: but when hee alloweth and loveth it in another, then there is no passion to lead him, but it's a signe his heart is bent to it: for it's a signe of grace when you love those that excell in grace; so on the contrary it's a signe of a corrupt and rotten heart, when wee *rejoyce in iniquity.* As for example, suppose a man have a lust of uncleanesse, yet disliketh it in another, and liketh those that excell in the contrary vertue, it's a signe hee is in a good estate; and this is true, because in another a man hath no passion to lead him away.

Eleventhly, when a man shall commit a sinne cleane to the contrary after perswasion, and long deliberation, as in *Jeroboam*, *Saul*, and *Ahab*; these committed their sinnes but once or twice: *Saul* had a commandement from *Samuel* not to doe it, he had many dayes deliberation upon it, yet hee did; which lost him his soule. *David* committed greater sinnes, yet God counted them nothing, because he did not cast God away: but *Saul* had cast him off; so *Jeroboam* set up the calfe on deliberation, and contrary to the perswasion of the Prophet, therefore God cast him off. This was *Balams* sinne, who deliberated what he should doe, yet having a secret desire

desire of reward, did curse *Israel*; which made God cast him off: this was the sin of *Francis Spira*, who was smitten for committing of a sinne of deliberation.

Twelfthly and lastly, when a man shall make no conscience of small particular sinnes, wherein his judgement is convicted that they are sinnes, it's a signe sinne hath dominion over him: this is plaine by Scripture; *He that is not faithfull in the greatest*, he may doe it, yet not be faithfull. Againe by reason, if a small sinne be a sinne against God, then why make you no conscience of the least? for God is offended with these as well as with the greatest: so if ye make conscience of the greatest of the duties of Gods worship, why doe you not also of the least duties? for God is pleased with these, as well as with the other. Some say they will be religious, but they need not be so precise as some scrupulous men are: but let them examine themselves: if the least sinnes be sinnes, they must also make conscience of them: so if we must keepe an houre of the Sabboth, there is the same reason of the rest of the houres; so for idle speeches, and fashioning of our selves to the world; so if we seeke for preferment or riches, it is contrary to the commandement of God: seeke not to be rich; for *they that will be rich, drowne themselves in perdition and destruction*: so wee must not keepe company with evill and unsanctified men: examine how wee practise this in all duties commanded, let us try our selves by abstaining from occasions, whether wee refraine our selves from the temptations of objects; for our speech must

must be gracious, not by fits, but alwayes; so we must be diligent in our Callings: if out of conscience we doe this, we are faithfull; otherwise wee are not: for the same God which commanded us not to kill, commanded us not to commit adultery: if then thou committest adultery, thou offendest God: so *Moses* would not leave an hoofe behind him in Egypt, because God commanded him so to doe. *Know you not that no unrighteous man shall inherit the Kingdome of God?* 1 *Cor.* 6. 9. So if wee abstaine from foule sinnes, yet if we commit the least, wee shall never goe to heaven.

Vse 2. It serves for encouragement for fearefull Christians: for if sinne shall not have dominion over you, then this may encourage you against the sinne that prevaileth against you sometimes; at last you shall have the victory: it is true that many sinnes make warre against many Christians', and will not be overcome for a long time, it may be for one, two, or three yeares; yet let us not be discouraged, but renew our strength againe, and in the end wee shall have the victory.

Vse 3. Thirdly, we have here the priviledge of Christians; for though they be servants while others be Princes, yet they are free in regard of their lusts. To see a man led to his execution, wee would not think it were for his honour; so when ungodly men thrive in their worldy lusts, their soules are led to destruction, when sinne shall have no dominion over the godly; but the ambitious and voluptuous men doe whatsoever their lusts command them, with a miserable bondage.

It

It is not enough for men to see their sinnes, or to blame them in themselves, or to purpose to amend or forsake them, but they must strive to overcome them, or else they shall have no promise of the Gospel apply'd unto them. *Pharaoh* was a wicked man, yet with heart he purposed to let the children of *Israel* goe; but when some temptation assaulted him, then he would not let them goe: so *Saul* purposed in his heart not to kill *David*, insomuch that he sware to *Jonathan* he would not doe it; yet afterward he attempted it upon another temptation: but wee must come to feele that sinne hath no dominion over us, otherwise we shall heare that sentence, *Depart from mee ye wicked into everlasting fire*; and, *Out of thy owne mouth I will judge thee, O thou wicked servant.* *Vse 4.*

And so much may be sufficient for the unfolding the first point of doctrine; proceed wee to a second which flowes from hence also, and that is this, *viz.* That *sinne although it doe not raigne in the Saints, yet doth remaine and dwell in them*: for proofe whereof see this place of Scripture; *If any man thinketh* (saith Saint *John*) *that he hath no sinne, hee is a lyer, and there is no truth in him.* The truth whereof will be seene in these things clearely. *Doct. 2.* 1 Ioh. 1.8.

1. Because our knowledge is imperfect, and therefore every grace is imperfect, as our faith, and so our love; and therefore much sinne must be in a man, in as much as his grace is not perfect.

2. The flesh lusteth against the spirit; therefore it is plaine there is sinne in us, yea so much that often times it even captivateth us.

3. Wee have in this life but the first-fruits of the spirit: now when wee shall have it in fulnesse, we shall have no more than enough; therefore having now but the first-fruits of the spirit, Mortification, and Sanctification, sinne is not wholly abolished in the Saints in this life, bnt doth dwell in them. The reasons hereof are,

Reas. 1. 1. To humble us, and to make us see what is in our hearts, and to make us know that the Lord bringeth us to the holy Land; therfore God sometimes left the Israelites to try them; and so hee troubled *Hezechiah* to know what was in his heart; and so he sent a Messenger of Satan to buffet S. *Paul*, lest hee should be exalted above measure through aboundance of Revelations; and so the Lord doth deale with every Saint.

Reas. 2. 2. That Christ may be acknowledged; for if wee had no sinne in us, we should not acknowledge the benefits of his mediation so much as now wee doe: *All are shut up under sinne, that he might have mercie upon all*, *Rom.*3.9. & 11.32. that is, that it might be manifested and declared, that they are saved meerely by the mercie of God in Christ, as is said, *Rom.*3.26. Otherwise wee should not rightly value our justification and sanctification; but seeing him subduing, pardoning our sinnes, wee see what need we have of him, how that we are lost without him.

Reas. 3. 3. That wee might exercise our faith. 1 *Ioh.*3.2. *Wee are the sonnes of God, but it doth not yet appeare what wee shall be, &c.* So God hath hid his children under baseneſse, that their faith might be exercised: for things we see, we may easily beleeve; but *faith is*

of

of things not seene: therefore God doth as men doe, hide Jewels under base places, where men would looke least for them: wherefore wicked men stumble, and are offended at this, because they doe not beleeve it; and therefore it is made an article of our faith, that we need and beleeve the remission and forgivenesse of sinnes. But let us apply it.

Vse 1. 1. This should teach us not to be discouraged for those infirmities that are in us, for there are such in every Saint. Sinne is a guest to evill men, but a theefe to the godly, which they would not have come in their hearts: so it is one thing to weare a chaine as an ornament, and another as a fetter to restraine them: therefore the godly ought not to be discouraged, but to assure themselves they are under grace.

Vse 2. 2. Wee must not censure men for the slips and falls wee see in them: for wee must remember that sinne dwelleth in them, we must not presently judge them to be hypocrites: *Be not many masters*, saith S. *James*, that is, censure him not, for *he standeth or falleth to his owne Master. Rom.* 14.4.

Vse 3. 3. This should teach us to be watchfull, and not to think our labour is at an end when we are in the state of grace; for sinne still dwelleth in us, and though we have the victory over sinne one day, it will fight against us the next day: as in a garden the weeds will grow, because the roots are not quite plucked up, and taken away; so sinne is in us, and therefore we must think it will fight against us and vex us; and therefore I say, let us renue our strength.

Now for this, wee must doe these two things. { First, weaken sinne. Secondly, pray to God to make us watchfull.

And so I have also done with the second doctrine.

Againe, from the latter part of these words, or reason of the promise made unto them in the former part of this verse, that *sinne shall not have dominion over them, because they are not under the Law, but under grace*: I gather this conclusion, viz. That *the way to overcome sinne, is to get assurance of the love and grace of God, and that it is forgiven them*: the reason why the Apostle promises them *sinne shall not have dominion over them*, is, because *they are not under the Law, but under grace*, that is, they had assurance of Gods love, and that their sinne is forgiven them: this is proved from that, *Faith purifieth the heart*; and, *You repent and beleeve the Gospel*.

Doct. 3.

Now the reasons hereof are these foure especially.

Reas. 1. 1. Because it is the meanes to get the spirit, without which no sinne is forgiven, which commeth by faith; for it is not recieved by the law, for so saith the Apostle, *Received you the spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Gal. 3. 2.*

Reas. 2. Secondly, it is the way to make us beleeve the promises, to make us beleeve that wee are transformed into a heavenly nature: for when wee beleeve the promises are true, that works love in us, and love transformeth us into the divine nature, without which no sinne is overcome.

Reas. 3. Thirdly, because hereby wee are able to resist the tentations, which are either for the enjoying of good,

good, or fleeing of evill; so that these promises propound more good than sinne can harme: sinne threatned the losse of outward things, but the promises propound eternall life, which is better than all things else in the world.

Fourthly, because we doe delight in God: for when wee doe beleeve in God that our sinnes are forgiven us in Christ, then we looke at God as on a mercifull Father, and then wee cease to delight in the world, and we begin to delight our selves in the Lord.

The use hereof is, first, for direction, to teach us the way how to heale a sinne, and that is to get assurance that it is pardoned and forgiven; for legall terrours doe not heale a sinne, but it is faith that purifies the heart, and purifying pacifies it: As a Traytor will not come in, when hee heares a proclamation out for his death; but when he heares he shall live, and be pardoned, this makes him to come in: so we, when wee onely fix our eyes upon the legall terrours, shall not heale our sinnes; but when wee beleeve they are pardoned, this heales them. *Vse 1.*

But sorrow and a broken heart are required for sinners to be assured of their forgivenesse. *Object.*

This sorrow is not so much commanded, but it is that whereby God prepareth his servants hearts, to make them see what need they have of pardon, and so they may ask pardon: but the sorrow commanded is that which followes beliefe; for the more I beleeve the promises, the more I shal grieve for displeasing him. *Answ.*

But what is the way to get assurance of the for- *Quest.*

giveneſſe of our ſinnes may ſome ſay.

Anſw. I anſwer, That that be { done which is to be done on our part, beleeved which God hath promiſed.

Firſt, The things to be done on our part, are theſe:

1. Confeſſion plainely and truly: we muſt confeſſe them to God, and to man, when we our ſelves cannot overcome them.

2. Contrition; which is when a man is not ſtubborne, and reſiſteth Gods will, and will pleaſe himſelfe; to get his heart broken, and to ſay as S. *Paul* ſaith, *Lord, what wilt thou have mee to doe?* and then we are ſubject to his will. *To him will I looke that is of a contrite heart.*

3. Deſertion, or forſaking of ſinne: for, *He that forſaketh not his ſinnes, ſhall not proſper*; which is when we having the like occaſions, yet will not give way to him, but follow our owne luſts.

Secondly, That that be beleeved which God hath promiſed; and that is, that as hee hath ſaid, *He will forgive our ſinnes*, upon ſuch and ſuch conditions, ſo we beleeve it. And to make us to doe this, theſe motions may perſwade us.

Motive 1. 1. Becauſe he is mercifull; in whoſe mercy there are three things, all very materiall and moving.

1. It is naturall to him, hee is not weary of ſhewing mercy: as the eye is not weary of ſeeing, nor the eare of hearing, no more is God in ſhewing mercie: but in us it is not naturall, but an infuſed quality, and therefore wee are weary when men provoke us often.

2. His

2. His mercy is infinite; but in men it is not ſo: therefore come within compaſſe of this quality, and hee will exerciſe it; for no ſinne is beyond Gods mercy: this keepeth us from deſpaire: for though they be great, yet God is able to forgive them. As the raine watereth as well the great field as the little garden, and as the Sunne ſhines as well on mountaines as on Molehills, and as it diſperſeth the thick miſt as well as the leaſt thinne cloud, ſo doth Gods mercy paſſe by great ſinnes as well as little.

But if our ſinnes be exceeding great, aggravated with circumſtances, and often committed, then we cannot imagine that God will forgive us. This is anſwered by the Prophet *Iſaiah*; God is more mercifull than man can be ſinfull, he is more mercifull than we can imagine: ***My thoughts are as much above your thoughts as the heaven is above the earth.*** *Obiect.* *Solut.* Iſay 55 9.

3. We ſee much mercy in men, and in the mother of a childe: now, it is but as a drop out of the ocean of Gods mercy, but as a ſpark to the whole element of fire. ***If you being evill, can give good things to your children, how much more ſhall your heavenly Father, &c.*** See what the Scripture ſaith, ***I am mercifull, forgiving iniquity, tranſgreſſion and ſinne***: the firſt word ſignifies originall ſinne, the ſecond actuall, the third rebellion; all which God can forgive.

Secondly, becauſe it is the end of Chriſts comming into the world: now, no man will doe any thing, eſpecially ſo great a matter as to kill himſelfe, for no end: Chriſt then dyed for the forgiveneſſe of ſinnes. This S. *Paul* urgeth: the end *Motive* 2.

of

1 Tim. 1. 15. of Christs comming was *to save sinners*; otherwise the crosse of Christ had beene of none effect, and his mediation of no use, if men did not commit sinnes, or if God should not forgive them: therefore God must needs be ready to forgive.

Motive 3. Thirdly, because God beseecheth us to be reconciled unto him through Christ: now, if God doth this, if wee seeke earnestly, hee will heare us. The Prodigall being willing to come home to his Father, he met him, and received him joyfully: so doth God, hee chargeth his Ministers to compell men to come in, that is, to preach Gods mercy, that he will forgive their sinnes; and therefore the most acceptable action to God is to bring a sinner to him.

Motive 4. Fourthly, the charge laid on us to beleeve: wee are charged on the paine of death to beleeve; and therefore it is most profitable for us, and most pleasing to him: hee takes it wel at our hands that wee should beleeve, and by the hand of faith lay hold on him; which hee would not doe if he were not ready to forgive.

Motive 5. Fifthly, from the examples of others; let us see what God hath done for them, and it will make us beleeve: he forgave *Manasses* as well as *Joshua*, he pardoned *Mary Magdalen* as well as *Elizabeth*, and *Paul* as well as *Peter*: he hath forgiven the greatest sinnes as well as the least, and he will also deale so with us.

Motive 6. Sixthly, from the effects of it which are these.

1. It glorifieth God much: *Abraham* beleeved, and glorified God much: for the greater the sinner is, the more honour is given to God: as the Physitian

Physitian hath the greatest glory by curing the greatest wound: so God hath the greatest glory by forgiving the greatest sins, which wound the soule even to death.

2. It moveth us to love God the more. *Mary* loved much, because much was forgiven her.

3. It mollifies the most; it causeth them to relent, and weepe much more. This is plaine by that place, where it is said, that when God forgave the greatest sinnes, then they mourned and lamented, as in those Converts, *Act.2.37.*

4. It purifies the heart: for no man lookes to keepe his heart pure, untill hee be assured of the forgivenesse of his sinnes; for till then hee cannot looke on God as on a Father: but on the contrary, when the sinne is not forgiven, God loseth the glory of being a Father, and the glory of his truth, and of his mercy; and that hardens the heart from relenting.

Seventhly, from the price which was payed, and which no sinne can goe beyond: indeed, if Christ had payed but a finite price, wee might feare that our sinnes should not be forgiven. If a man were in debt two thousand pound, and there were but one pay'd, hee might be discouraged: but when there is infinitely more pay'd than the debt is, this should make us beleeve our sinnes are forgiven us whatsoever they be, seeing they be all but finite. *Motive 7.*

Eightly, from the tenour of the Promises, which proclaime that they that beleeve and repent, and forsake their sinnes, shall finde pardon for them: as a King that proclaimes that all traytors and re- *Motive 8.*

bels shall be pardoned if they would lay downe their weapons. Now, *Non est excipiendum ubi lex non excipit*, There is no exception to be made where the law makes none. God saith, yea therefore hath said and sworne it, that he will forgive our sinnes, that we may beleeve it.

Object. But I have committed the sinne oft.

Answ. Yet God will forgive thee. *Though thou hast oft committed whoredome, yet I will forgive thee, if thou turne unto me*, saith the Lord, by the Prophet, of the house of Israel, *Jer.* 3. 1.

Vse Hence then (to make some use of it) wee may learne not to deceive our selves, to think we are in the state of grace, when we are not: for if wee did truly beleeve our sinnes are forgiven us, wee would be healed: but if we have the same lusts, and keepe the same company, which we did when wee were not changed, it is a meere delusion, whatsoever we say or think.

And thus much for the third point too: there yet remaines one more, wherewith wee will conclude the whole text; and that we may draw from the contrary to what the Apostle here saith; and indeed it is implyed, though not expreſt: for if sin have no dominion over them that are not under the law, but under grace: then on the other side must it needs be as true, That *Whosoever is under the law, sinne hath dominion over him*, that is, Hee that refraineth sinne onely for feare of the law, and of judgements, sinne hath dominion over him: this is the case of them that refraine sinning onely for feare, and for the salvation of their soules, or for educations sake, which

Doct. 4.

which have beene brought up in good families, or such as repent upon some amazement, like the bulrushes which hang downe their heads onely while the shower lasts. And that,

Reas. 1. First, because all such as are not under grace, but under the law, have not received the spirit, which commeth by hearing the Gospell: and no creature can change one creature into another, as lead into gold, or a Wolfe into a Lamb, unlesse it be by Gods spirit.

Secondly, to such Gods service is burthensome, and violent motions last not long: they are weary in clambering up an hill: all naturall motions are swifter at the last than at the first; but these are like the Israelites, who after a time would have returned into *Ægypt* againe.

Vse 1. Now then, to end all with the time, let us 1. Be exhorted not to abstaine from any sinne for feare of punishment, but consider whether thou wouldest serve God for Gods sake, although there were neither heaven nor hell: it must be our meat and drink, which men would doe though there were no punishment for the omission of it. *Blessed is hee that hungreth and thirsteth after righteousnesse.*

Vse 2. 2. Hence wee may learne not to deferre repentance, till death, sickneſse, crosses, or age comes: then it may be you would not sinne, though with *Balaam* you had your house full of gold and silver: for it's not the abstinence from sinne that God loveth, but the change of the heart. *Amaziahs* heart was not right though he walked in all the wayes of *David*. There are men that have made a covenant

with hell and death; but God will disanull that covenant, or it will be but equivocall; many have sworne in their sicknesse never to commit sinne again, which afterward they have committed again with greedinesse; many have dyed in the same without repentance.

3. Labour to see your selves doing duties with as much love as you can, and with as little feare, because *perfect love casteth out feare.* And so (beloved) I have given you a briefe survay of the severall points contained in this portion of holy Scripture: wherefore, if you know these things, happy are yee if yee doe them.

* * *

FINIS.

THE DEFORMED FORME OF A FORMALL PROFESSION:

OR,

The description of a true and false Christian, either excusing, or accusing him, for his pious, or pretended conversation:

Shewing that there is a powerfull *godlinesse* necessary to salvation, and that many have the *forme*, but not the *power* thereof.

In handling whereof,

These three things are plainly and powerfully explained and applyed.

1. *What* godlinesse *is.*
2. *What the* power *of it is.*
3. *What be the reasons why some have but the* forme *thereof: together with the meanes and marks, both how to attaine, and to try our selves whether we have the* power *thereof or not.*

By that late faithfull and worthy Minister of Iesus Christ, JOHN PRESTON, Doctor in Divinity, Chaplaine in Ordinary to his Majestie, Master of Emanuell Colledge in *Cambridge*, and sometimes Preacher of Lincolnes Inne.

Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of Heaven, but hee that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven, Math. 7. 21.

Pure religion, and undefiled before God and the Father, is this, to visit the fatherlesse and widowes in their afflictions, and to keepe himselfe unspotted of the world, James 1. 27.

Printed 1641.

THE DEFORMED FORME OF A FORMALL PROFESSION.

2 TIMOTHIE. 3. 5.

Having a forme of godlineſſe, but denying the power thereof.

OUR Apoſtle S. *Paul* doth in theſe words give us a part of a deſcription of wicked men in the latter times: & he bringeth them in by way of prevention or objection, or anſwer to an objection, as if ſome ſhould wonder that there ſhould be ſuch kinde of perſons in the Church, as hee in the former verſes had deſcribed; *Covetous, boaſters, proud, blaſphemers, diſobedient to parents, unthankfull, unholy, &c.* doe theſe live as the Church do's? Doe theſe retaine the Sacraments, and the like? Yes, ſaith

ſaith the Apoſtle, *they doe, wee cannot denie it; only this, They have a forme of godlineſſe, but &c.* So that the point of doctrine ariſing from hence, doth plainly appeare even at the firſt ſight to be this, *viz.* That *there is a powerfull godlineſſe neceſſary to ſalvation, and that many have but the* forme, *not the* power *thereof.*

Now, there be three things to be explained in opening of this doctrine, to ſhew

1. What *godlineſſe* is.
2. What the *power* thereof is.
3. The reaſons why many have no more but the *forme* therof.

For the firſt, that you may the better conceive what *Godlineſſe* is, I will firſt ſhew you what it is not.

What *godlineſſe* is not.

Firſt then, it is not bare nature; but that *godlineſſe* which God requireth of all men, is more then ſo. God indeed hath commanded nature, yea even corrupt nature, to bring forth many fruits of *godlineſſe*; as much abſtinence from pleaſure, much patience, much temperance, and ſuch like, which are all very beautifull in their owne Spheres; but becauſe they come not from God, nor his Spirit of ſanctification, or becauſe they have no reſpect of God, therefore they are not *godlineſſe*, neither doth God regard them.

Secondly, it is not the act of religion proceeding from ſelfe-love, though offered to God, in regard that men ſee that God is the governour of the world, that he hath the keyes of heaven and earth, and men may doe much to God for ſuch reſpects, uſing

using him as a bridge to get to heaven by, making themselves their utmost ends: and therefore this is not *godlinesse*: but what is it then, you will say?

What *godlinesse* is.

Thirdly, it is a divine grace infused into the soule by God, whereby a man followes God, loves him, magnifies him, sets him up in his heart above all, and manifesteth this in his life, and the whole course of it, doing all for him and to him: and it is thus wrought; When the creature comes to see no beauty in himselfe, and no help in himselfe: and sith God is full of all beauty, and all excellencie, and all power, able to answer our desires in every thing; when he comes to see and consider this, then he begins to set up God in his heart; as the Ivy having no root, cleaves faster to the tree, so likewise doth he only to God, seeing that hee cannot subsist of himselfe; and when hee comes to see that hee depends on him for all things, he will doe all things for him, because all are from him: whereas before, seeing something in himselfe, hee magnified himselfe, and so withdrew himselfe and his heart from God. And so I come to the next particular, *viz.*

What is meant by the *power* of godlinesse: and for that, you shall know there is a godlinesse, which is not only in words and complements, but in deed and truth; for it not only puts upon a man a washie colour of perfection, but dyes his heart in graine in holinesse; and it differs from the other in five things.

What is meant by the *power* of godlinesse.

First, It is done in the *Power*, when it is not the bare picture, where there are not only the outward

Five differences betweene the *forme* and *power* of godlineſſe.

lineaments of nature, but when there is life in it; and that you ſhall know when a man needs not to be called on to good duties, but there is a naturall principle of life in him, wherby he doth them with facility and conſtancie, as naturall actions of life: when likewiſe he doth grow in them; for where there is life, there is alſo growth; and when hee doth likewiſe deſire that which may feed it, as the meanes which may ſtrengthen him in the doing of it; as if a man have life, he deſireth meat and ſleep; and when as there is life, then the works that come from a man, are not dead works, and then you have the power of godlineſſe, it is not a faſhion only.

Secondly, It is not true, but counterfeit, when it is like the true, but not the ſame, but wants ſome particular property that is to be found in the true; as that which is counterfeit Balſame, which is like the true, but wants the power of healing; and ſo likewiſe a counterfeit drug, and a counterfeit jewel, which wants that property which the true hath: and the want of this you ſhall finde in the uſe, and in the wearing: As a rotten bow is found to be rotten when the arrow is drawne to the head; ſo if a mans *godlineſs* be counterfeit, and hee unſound, it will be diſcovered in the wearing, or in ſome particular caſe, when he is put to it, or tried. A Jeweller will finde out the property of a Jewell, but an ordinary man cannnot doe it, but by uſe & the wearing. To inſtance in ſome particular parts of *godlineſs*; the love of God, if it be true, hath theſe properties, that a man loves the brethren; for how canſt thou love an immateriall holineſſe in God, if thou loveſt not

that

that holineſſe which is ſtampt upon the creature like thy ſelfe: ſo likewiſe rectitude and uprightneſſe of heart; try it by this property, which our Saviour Chriſt makes of it, *gracious ſpeeches*; Chriſt ſaith, that that which is predominant in the heart, the mouth will be full of: ſo for keeping of the commandements, if in truth they have this property, that they be not grievous, they will doe them with a naturall delight, and inward willingneſſe: ſo for taking of Chriſt by faith, every man beleeveth he doth ſo, but our Saviour Chriſt trieth it by this, *Goe ſell all that thou haſt, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven*: & ſo mayeſt thou try thy ſelf when thou art put to it by loſſe of goods, or credit, or otherwiſe.

Thirdly, It is in the *power*, when it is ſtrong and not weake, when a man hath power and ſtrength in doing good duties: and hereby many are diſcovered, who have good purpoſes only, which though they be hearty in them for a time, yet they want power and ſtrength; and this is the caſe of many which be in the Church, who though they have the knowledge of the word of God, and approve the truth in their conſciences, deſiring to be ſaved by the practiſe of it, and ſo take up many good purpoſes, which yet come to nothing, becauſe they want power and ſtrength. Conſider therefore if thou haſt power and ſtrength to performe thy purpoſes, and then thou haſt the *power* of godlineſſe; but not elſe. Many will ſay, I am but fleſh and blood, and what will you have me to doe? now here wants the power, as you may ſee in the fifth Chapter of *Deuteronomy*, from the 7. verſe

to the 29, the people there ſaid to *Moſes*, *That what the Lord ſhould ſpeake to him, they would doe it*; they ſaid then what they thought, and what they meant and minded, and the Lord ſaith of them, *O that there were ſuch an heart in them, that they would feare me, and keepe my commandements, &c.* They wanted the *power*, though they had good purpoſes.

Fourthly, If thou wouldeſt know whether thy godlineſſe be in the *power* or no, ſee whether thou haſt not only the ſhaddow of it, but the ſubſtance; for there is a ſhaddow with the ſubſtance: as if thou pray, there is a formall doing of it, which is as the ſhaddow; but to pray in the holy Ghoſt, not in the voyce of thy owne ſpirit, but out of Gods owne ſpirit; not out of memory or wit, but out of thy heart, and that an heart ſanctified by the Spirit of adoption; this is the ſubſtance. And ſo to heare for knowledge onely, that is the ſhaddow; but to heare for practiſe, that is the ſubſtance: And ſo againe, for us to preach the Goſpel, to doe it becauſe *neceſſity is laid upon us*, and there's *a woe denounced againſt us if we doe it not*, as ſaith our Apoſtle of himſelfe, there is the ſhaddow; *But to preach with power, and authority, and not as the Scribes and Phariſes, with the enticing words of mans wiſedome*, this is the ſubſtance.

Fifthly and finally, It is in the *power* when a man goeth thorough the work: a thing is ſaid to be in the *power* when it is effectuall, when a man bringeth it to an end, and doth it not by halves: ſo ſome begin indeed, but then they leave the work in the rudiments: but if a man have the power, hee will break

break through all difficulties, hee will leape over all till he hath *wrought out his ſalvation with feare and trembling.*

And thus having diſpatcht the *two* former particulars, I haſten to the *third* and laſt of the premiſes, *viz.* The reaſons why ſome have but the *forme*, and not the *power*: and they are eſpecially theſe.

Reaſons why many men have but the forme.

Firſt, becauſe the forme is moſt eaſie, but the *power* is a matter of more difficulty: for the former it doth not call upon a man to cut off his *right hand*, to pluck out his *right eye*, and to *denie himſelfe* in things neareſt and deareſt unto him, as the *power* doth; for it requires a man ſhould take paines in good duties, and goe through them, not to omit or ſlight the leaſt of them in the leaſt meaſure that may be, or to lie in knowne ſinnes; and farther, it requires a man ſhould doe this from day to day, and that when it croſſes the fleſh moſt: this is an hard ſaying, and cauſed many that they would no longer abide with Chriſt; they were willing to obey the *forme*, but not the *power*.

Secondly, becauſe this *power* breeds hatred and oppoſition in the world, and the world will croſſe it againe: now then, when a man may retaine the forme, and hold in with the world, a man may be of the world ſtill, and the world will love his own: whereas the *power* makes men *Antipodes* to all the world; this makes many care for no more but the forme. Fit for this purpoſe is that place, *Wiſd.* 2. 12. where the ungodly ſay of the righteous on this wiſe. *Theſe mens lives are contrary to ours, and their doings reprove our thoughts, therefore let us oppreſſe them:*

and Christ tells us we must look for no other, saying, *We shall be hated of all men for his names sake*; and it is no easie matter to have all men in contention with us: this then is another reason hereof.

Thirdly, because it is enough to serve a mans turne for his unregenerate ends: for men having a naturall conscience, whereof they must stop the mouth, and it being injudicious, and not able to judge of the *power of godlinesse*, they are satisfied with the *forme*: as when Children are wayward and wrangling, because wee know they are not judicious, we give them Nutts, not gold or silver to still them, and it serves their turnes as well; so is it here in the naturall conscience, it doth judge the *forme* to be enough to carry a man to heaven; and who would doe more than he needs must?

Fourthly, because if men have but the *forme of godlinesse*, Satan troubles them not, nor the flesh: but when men labour for the *power of godlinesse*, and goe on any further than the *forme*, then Satan (knowing this will bring them to heaven) hath the power of hell against them, and hee keepes a great busseling with them to hinder them what hee can: and so doth the flesh too; but it will not resist the *forme*, for that will stand with a mans lusts; but if hee be divided against himselfe, hee cannot endure it; as to denie a friend or a stranger, if he be importunate, is a hard matter; but to denie a mans wife that lyes in his bosome, if shee be earnest, is more difficult; but to denie a mans selfe when he is importunate with himselfe, is most difficult; and yet this you must doe, if you have the *power* of it. Now to denie the

power

power of it, is when it is laid open to men and offered, and they with ſtubbornneſſe of will reſiſt and denie it.

And ſo much for the opening of the words: now for the folding of them up againe, and firſt from the firſt, what *godlineß* is,

Let us learne not to deceive our ſelves, for it is not (as I told you) naturall or morall vertues only, no nor the doing of the actions of religion, a man making himſelfe his utmoſt ends thereof: content not your ſelves therefore with any thing that is not godlineſſe: let mee ſpeake unto you as *Peter* to the diſperſed brethren, where after that he had reckoned up many vertues, *patience*, *knowledge*, *temperance*, *&c.* he bids them add to all theſe *godlineß*; as if hee had ſaid, all the reſt are not availeable unleſſe you have *godlineß* alſo: ſee therefore that all theſe be *godlineß*, that is, that they all come from God, and looke to him; for this is the nature of *godlineß*, to come to the Wells head, and to ſearch higher than nature, to have another *Alpha* and *Omega* of all that is within us, or that comes from us, than what is within us of our ſelves. And then againe, if we be to preach to others, wee ſhould learne to preach Chriſt and God, that is, to enforce all as from them and to them; not only to exhort to morall vertues, with ſuch inſtructions as may be taken out of *Seneca* or *Plutarch* (though theſe have their uſe and place) but as out of the Scriptures, let Chriſt and God come in, and ſhew you how all doe come from God, and looke to God: and ſo all you that are hearers, be ſure all you doe be *godlineß*, that is, comming

Vſe 1.

comming from God, and tending to him: for motions have their denominations from their *terminus à quo*, and from their ends; as that is called *calefaction* that tends to *heat*: so is that truly *godlineſſe* that tends to *God*, and hath reſpect unto him. Art thou a Student? when thou ſtudieſt and takeſt paines in thy books, ſee whether thou do'ſt it for thy ſelfe or for thy credit, or doeſt thou make God thy utmoſt end? examine thy heart, and examine it narrowly: and ſo likewiſe you that are exerciſed in other Callings, doe you doe them that you may doe good to mankinde in them, as a ſervant that uſes his talent to his maſters ſervice? then is this *godlineſs*: ſo if you eat or drink, or recreate your ſelves, doe you doe it that you may doe good better, as men whet their ſythes that they may mowe the better? then this is alſo *godlineſs*, for it tends to God and *godlineſſe*.

But you will ſay, Doe you altogether condemne naturall and morall vertues? muſt they doe nothing? yes, you ſhall have this uſe of them, that they will help as winde to drive the ſhip; only it is *godlineſs* is the rudder that guides it, and aymes at the right haven: as for example, you are commanded to love your children, and your wives; you are bound to doe this, if you had no naturall affections in you; only having theſe affections in you, you doe it with more eaſe; elſe you muſt drive the ſhip with oares, whereas now the winde fills the ſailes, and you doe it with more facility and eaſe: and ſo likewiſe you are bound to be patient and meeke, and you muſt be ſo, though your natures

natures be not ſo; but if your natures be ſo, you may the more eaſily be ſo, yet ſo as *godlineſs* muſt ſet the Compaſſe, and ſteere the ſhip. Morall vertues are like good horſes, that draw the Chariot, but *godlineſs* is the *Auriga*, the *Coachman*; without which, take the moſt excellent things that nature is capable of, if it be not guided by it, the Lord regards them not; for God regards nothing but that which drawes the creatures unto him; but now *morall vertues* makes us reſt upon our owne bottomes, and ſo likewiſe all things whatſoever they be that beautifie the fleſh; for God will have *no fleſh to glory in it ſelfe; but let him that glories, glory in the Lord.* Nay, I add more, take the graces of the ſpirit, wherewith God adornes his Saints, as an husband doth his wife with Jewels, if you magnifie them, you doe ſo much withdraw your hearts from God: therefore in heaven it is ſaid there is neither Sunne, nor Moone; now what is that? there is no excellencie in any creature that is magnified there, but God is all in all, hee is Sunne and Moone: and therefore in the *Revelation* of Saint *John* it is ſaid, and ſaid to their honour, it is made their worth that they give all to God; *Glory and power be to our God for ever*; they fall on their faces, throw down their crownes, though created glorious creatures. When the evill Angels began to reflect upon themſelves, it was their ruine, they fell from God: for the creature of it ſelfe is like a glaſſe without a bottom; if it commeth to ſtand upon its owne bottome, it falls, and breakes; and ſo the Angels when they would ſtand of themſelves, they fell downe to the

1 Cor. 1. 29. 30

Rev. 7. 12.

lowest pit: and therefore of all graces, labour for emptying graces, as Faith and Love; for these give all unto God, nothing to mans selfe; and therefore they are the great graces in religion, which you must chiefly labour for.

Vse 2. Secondly, from that there is a *power* in *godlinesse*, if it be such a powerfull thing (as you have heard it is) then this may serve to comfort us in the wayes of it. Whereseever it is in truth, there it is *in power*: say that thou hast such a light that thou canst not beleeve, that there be such roades as that thou canst not walk by them, yet if thou hast *godlinesse*, thou shalt be able to overcome; for *the kingdome of God consists in power*. When God commeth to dwell in any mans heart, hee sendeth godlinesse into it, which rules in it as a King in his Kingdome; think therefore of it as of Monarchs as *Alexander* was, or those which *Daniel* speaketh of, it carries all before it, it bringeth every thought into subjection: and therefore also the Spirit is called a *spirit of power*; and if you have *godlinesse*, it commeth from the spirit, and therefore is accompanied with power; and therfore Christ is said to be *full of the holy Ghost*, and of *power*; and so *Stephen*, and *John* the *Baptist*; And grace is said to be a *powerfull* thing: *Be strong in the grace of God, and in the Power of his might.*

Now, the reason why godlines hath *power*, is, because *God* hath put vertue into it: As when you see such and such an hearb have such a vertue in it to doe such and such a thing, it is because God hath endued it with such a power; and so hath he done with godlinesse. If therefore thou hast any thing

to

to doe in religion, ſet on it; Haſt thou any luſt to overcome? ſet on it, and let mee ſpeake to thee as hee ſpake to *Gideon*, *Goe on thou valiant man in the might of the Lord.* The people of *Iſrael* travelling to the land of *Canaan*, ſaw the Cities walled to heaven, and that the Gyants were there, the ſonnes of *Anak*; yet *Joſhua* biddeth them be of good comfort, and feare not, for the Lord would fight for them, and *deliver their adverſaries into their hands*: ſo, though you ſee difficulties in the way to heaven: yet godlineſſe is a powerfull thing that will carrie you through all: therefore likewiſe the Apoſtle having prayed for the Epheſians, that they might *not faint at his tribulations for them, which was their glory*, but that they might *be ſtrengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, to comprehend with all Saints, the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Chriſt which paſſeth knowledge*; which becauſe they might think they ſhould never be able to do, he addeth, *To him that is able to do above all that we can aske or think, according to the power that worketh in us, be all glory*: as if hee ſhould have ſaid, God is able to doe it, and that by the power which worketh in him; ſo ſuppoſe to ſubdue ſome luſt of the fleſh, be a thing ſo hard as you think it wil never be done; nay, you conceive it to be a thing ſo improbable as that you are aſham'd to ask it: yet, *according to that power which worketh in us, he is able to doe above all we ask or think*: and therfore he prayeth *that their eyes may be opened, that they may ſee the greatneſſe of the power that wrought in them*; and it was not that they might ſee and look at it idly, but for the uſe to ſerve their

Eph. 3. 13, &c.

Ver. 20 21.

Eph. 1. 19.

turnes, that they laying hold of it, and using of it, might be able to doe these things which they desire should be done, even such things to which a mans nature is as untoward as water is to heat when there is none in it: only, as Christ said to *Mary, Beleeve and you shall see the power of God*, thou must goe to God for it by faith, and God will shew it forth unto you, and you shall have fruits of it. The end of faith is not only to apply the holy promises of justification, but of sanctification also: as for example, he hath promised to baptize you *with the holy Ghost and with fire*, that is, with zeale & other graces of the spirit, which must give them power and strength; and all, that *sinne might not raigne in their mortall bodies*. Goe to God then and urge him with his promise, and hee cannot denie you. When men therefore think to excuse themselves by saying, I am not able to doe such a thing, what will you have me to do? it is no excuse: for if they were but willing, it is all he requireth of them; the *power*, that belongeth to God; which if men would but beleeve, and go to him, he would undoubtedly give it them.

I therefore now ask thee, Wouldst thou turne to God? Wouldst thou overcome such and such a lust of uncleanesse, drunkennesse? &c. be it what it will be: if thou answer, No; then thou art justly condemned, thy blood be upon thy owne head: but if thou sayest, Yes, thou wouldst; then come but to God, be resolute to be religious in good earnest, and I will assure thee, hee will vouchsafe thee power to doe it. The Apostle saith, that God *would confirme them unto the end, that they might be blamelesse in the*

the day of the Lord Jeſus; for, ſaith he, *God is faithfull*, he hath *ſaid*, he hath *promiſed* it, hee ſhall break his word if he do not: let me reaſon it a little with you; Is it not an acceptable requeſt to goe to God with all thy heart, and to ſay, Lord, I deſire but the *power* and *ſtrength* to goe through with thy owne work? Do'ſt thou think hee will not heare thee? Remember Chriſt, the only Phyſician, how ready he was to heale men of their bodily diſeaſes when they came unto him; and hee hath not put off his nature now: Do'ſt thou think the power of his death & reſurrection were but fancies, or a notion? If not, goe on and feare not; for as God ſaid to *Joſhua*, ſo ſhalt thou finde him to deale with thee, *I will never leave thee, nor forſake thee.*

And ſo leaving what I have ſaid, to your further conſideration, I come to a third uſe, that ſeeing godlineſſe is ſuch a powerfull thing as you have ſeene, therefore you would take heed how you deceive your ſelves with fond deſires and purpoſes, that have no power, no force in them, ſo as to think that they will ſerve the turne; no nor yet a few feeble faint endeavours. I ſay to men that ſet on religious courſes without having their hearts changed, as Chriſt ſaid unto his Diſciples, *Tarrie yee in the Citie, till yee be endued with power from on high*: as if our Saviour Chriſt ſhould have ſaid, If yee goe preſently into the world, yee will not be able to goe through with your works; ſtay therefore with faſting and prayer till you have received power from on high to carrie you through: for new purpoſes in a man that returnes to his old nature, are like *new wine in*

Vſe 3.

Luk. 24. 49.

old vessells, they will break the vessells and be too bigge for your hearts: it is therefore enough to take up now a purpose, and begin to be diligent in your Calling or sanctifying the Sabbath; for, it is impossible these purposes should live in an hart that is carnall: for, as the soyle must be sutable to every creature, or else it will not live; so likewise you will never be able to performe these purposes.

How to get the power of godlinesse.

In the first place therefore labour to get new hearts, as the bottome of these purposes, which may be as the root to give sap to them; for then they will live and grow in you, when there is a soyle to sute with them.

Secondly, get power in beleeving. Christ our Saviour, when he came unto his Country, it is said, *He would not put forth his power to work many miracles there*: Why so? one would have thought hee should rather have wrought them there than any where else, both for his owne honour, and the good of his Country-men; no place then was fitter for that than it: yet there he works few or none, and the reason was, *because of their unbeliefe, they beleeved not*: so that it is the want of faith that holds Gods hands from strengthening you; you will not (I say) beleeve God, who hath sworn (and it is not an idle oath) that hee would grant that wee should *serve him in godlinesse and holinesse all the dayes of our life*. When the widow came to Christ to be healed of the issue which she had many years, it is said that *vertue went out of him to heale her, because she beleeved*: and though it have bin a disease of never so many yeares, yet if he say, *Be ye whole*, it is no matter what the

the diſeaſe is, ſo God be the Phyſician; and therefore beleeve.

Thirdly, pray, and furniſh your ſelves with all the graces of the ſpirit: not only goe about things, but maintaine a ſtock, fill the ciſterne every day within, whet and point the graces of God in you; for the inward man every day is ſubject to decay, as well as the outward man: and doe not take ayme at your ſelves, or at your ſtrength, when you are in a good mood, or by the preſent temper; for it vaniſhes if there be not a ſupply from day to day from grace within, if you doe not whet your ſoules every day.

Fourthly and laſtly, if this be true, that many are partakers of the *forme* that have not the *power* of godlineſſe; that when we come to looke on the faces of our Churches, we finde the *forme* in many: but if we come unto their dealings and carriages in private, ye ſhall ſcarce finde the *power* (it's as rare, as the other is frequent;) in their profeſſion indeed there is a *forme*, but yet ye ſhall finde religious ſervants as idle as others, and wives as ſtubborne as others, husbands and maſters as like Lyons in their families, and as falſe in their dealings as others: if this be true (I ſay) as it is too true, then *be not deceived, God is not mocked*, but try and examine your ſelves herein; for the Kingdome of God conſiſts not in *word* but in *power*: the Lord will not judge you according to your intentions and purpoſes, but according to your works; and it's not he that ſaith, *Lord, Lord, ſhall inherit the kingdome of heaven, but hee that doth the will of my Father, &c.* Be not then children in *Vſe 4.*

in understanding for to take counters for gold, lay not out your money for counterfeit things, be not fooles to take paines, and yet not have your turnes served. Let me speake unto you as *James* doth, *If you say yee have faith, and not works, can your faith save you?* I say, if you have the *forme* of godlines, and not the *power*, will that save you? if you would not be deceived then, examine your selves.

Five marks whereby to know whether wee have the power of godlinesse or no.

First of all, if thou dost more than nature: see that thou beest not the same man thou wast, that thou standest not up in the same troupe thou didst; if thou dost, thou hast no more but the *forme* of godlinesse in thee; for if thou hadst, it would turne thy nature, and add wings unto thee, making thee soare higher than nature: *I am able through Christ that strengthens me*, and that, not to doe some things, but *all things*. He sayes not, I doe purpose or desire, *but, I am able to doe all things, &c.* Those therefore that are able to stand against some lusts that are against their dispositions, but not against all, are weake, and have not this power in them. It may be thou art able to serve God when thou art poore, but what art thou when the world comes in upon thee? thou art able to abstaine from sinnes by nature, but godlinesse (as wee say of Physick) helps when nature failes: and as a naturall man with his sight sees farre, but with an Optick glasse sees further; so when nature falls short, Art helps: as though by nature a man may measure or count, yet if he comes to a large piece of ground, or a great summe, Art is required: so though thou mayest doe many things by nature, yet when godlinesse comes,

comes, it helps out in things wherein nature failes: as *Sampſon* could doe many ordinary things by his owne ſtrength; but when hee came to take downe or carrie away the gates of a Citie, and to pull downe an houſe, it is ſtill ſaid, *The ſpirit of the Lord came upon him, the Lord went with him*; and even ſo it is here.

Secondly, examine whether ye be godly in truth or no; for in Chriſt there are ſaid to be *dead branches* as well as *living*, that is, thoſe that have the *forme* as well as thoſe that have the *power*: but how are they diſtinguiſhed? the dead beare no fruit; and therefore as *John* ſaid, *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit*, God puts the *axe* to it: and ſo the three grounds did not bring forth fruit. Examine therefore your ſelves whether ye be full of fruit or no, whether ye abound in good duties or no, and doe them with an honeſt heart, for thereby the fourth ground is diſtinguiſhed from all the reſt. John 15. 2.

Thirdly, examine whether ye hold out in time of triall or not, whether you are able *to approve your ſelves with joy*, as the Apoſtle ſayes of himſelfe, that he did *when he was in trouble on every ſide*, on the right hand and on the left, in proſperity and in adverſity. The third ground held not out in temptation; and the reaſon was, *becauſe they had not depth of earth*, that is, they wanted *power*, and an inward ſtock of *grace*, for that is *depth of earth*: as a man that keeps a great houſe, if he have not a ſtock able to ſupply him, he will ſoone prove bankrupt; and for a trades-man (as yee ſay) if he be not diligent in his trade, and follow it well, and make his returnes, he will ſoon

breake; ſo alſo when a man wants inward *power*, and an inward ſtock of graces to beare his daily expences out, he will ſoone become bankrupt.

Fourthly, every grace hath ſome property annexed to it, which doth diſtinguiſh and difference it from counterfeit, as in *faith unfained, laborious love, patient hope*, and the like.

Thirdly, take heed leſt ſome luſt overcome all, and ſo luſt overtop all, and be predominant, as the praiſe of men, or a reſpect of pleaſure; as an Hawk (you ſee) though ſhee may ſoare and flie high, yet ſhe will have an eye to the prey below; and ſo have hypocrites. See therefore that ye ſerve God *in ſingleneſſe of heart*, and not *with eye-ſervice*, that you doe not harbour any luſt within, for that will ſpoile all at laſt: as weeds in a garden, if they be let alone, and not plucked up, will over-runne the hearbs; ſo is it with ſinne, if it be ſuffered, though it be but a little one at firſt, yet it will like a leproſie over-ſpread the whole man: and therefore looke to that, that ſome luſt doe not overcome all in the end.

And ſo I end for this text and time.

FINIS.

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